



## *News Release*

**Office of Councilmember Dave Cortese**

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### **Dave Cortese vows to keep Evergreen Visioning Project Task Force TOGETHER**

In response to an unprecedented and obstructionist act by Mayor Ron Gonzales and District 5 Councilmember Nora Campos to undermine the efforts of the Evergreen Visioning Project/Evergreen Smart Growth Strategy, District 8 Councilmember Dave Cortese has pledged to keep the Evergreen Visioning Project Task Force intact and help them continue to define and plan a vision for the future of Council District 8.

“Last night’s action by the Mayor is clearly intended to disenfranchise District 8 residents from continuing their rightful role in planning the future of their neighborhoods from a land use, transportation and community recreational standpoint,” said Cortese, adding, “evidently the Mayor would rather see these types of decisions in the hands of lobbyists and special interests because those are elements he feels he can control.”

The San Jose City Council had been asked to accept an update report on the Evergreen Visioning Project/Smart Growth Strategy as well as approve initiating the update to the Evergreen Area Development Policy and associated General Plan text amendments. Neither of these two actions would have had any effect on the number of units proposed to be built in Evergreen. The Mayor and Councilmember Campos chose to issue a memo midday yesterday, recommending the item for a two-week deferral as well as a revamp of the process to transition into a Specific Plan Task Force with representation from Districts 5, 7 and 8.

Cortese argued that allowing the process to remain intact and offering to come regularly to City Council with update reports as well as holding community meetings in Districts 5 and 7 was more than sufficient in terms of ensuring that the City and the general public play a role in how Evergreen is planned for the next ten years of development. Several layers of city staff are already extensively involved in the Visioning Project. The entitlement process, wherein development applicants go through a series of steps such as General Plan amendments, zonings, rezonings, PD permits, etc, necessitates wide community involvement.

The Evergreen Visioning Project Task Force (a broad representation of Council District 8 from Mt. Pleasant to Silver Creek to the San Felipe Foothills) was convened in August 2003 by Cortese to further the work of the Evergreen-Eastridge Knight Charrette (an intense 7 day design process to enliven the West Evergreen area, sponsored by the Knight Foundation in Community Building and the University of Miami) as well as consider other vacant parcels of land and what their development potential could be in light of property owner interest in developing residential units in Evergreen. The Visioning Project is predicated on the notion that developers would pay fees above and beyond what is normally required by city ordinance, including funding the upgrade of Highway 101 at the Yerba Buena, Capitol and Tully interchanges, funding the construction of the Thompson Creek Trail and many other amenities and public infrastructure improvements. The Task Force has worked relentlessly over the last 20 months (monthly, biweekly and in some cases, weekly) to study traffic data, propose site layouts and negotiate potential unit densities on individual parcels.